

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OMB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00

PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 DHA-02 ORM-02 IO-11 L-03

PM-04 NSC-05 SS-15 /070 W
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FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8823

INFO AMEMBASSY RANGOON

AMCONSUL CHIANG MAI

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 3916

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR TH BM

SUBJ: RTG DECISION TO EXPEL SEVEN BURMESE DISSIDENTS

REF: FBIA BK180220Y FEB 76

1. THE BANGKOK POST OF FEBRUARY 18 (REF) REPORTED THAT THE THAI CABINET HAS DECIDED TO EXPEL SEVEN LEADERS OF BURMESE DISSIDENT GROUPS WHO ARE NOW OPERATING IN THAILAND. THE SEVEN ARE:

(Q) GENERAL LET YA (LEADER OF THE PEOPLES PATRIOTIC PARTY)

(2) SAW KYA DOE (DEPUTY LEADER OF THE PPP)

(3) TIN MUANG WIN (LEADER OF THE UNION PARTY)

(4) COLONEL ZALI MAW (SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE PPP)

(5) BOHMU AUNG (LEADER OF THE ANTI-FASCIST PEOPLE'S UNITY PARTY)

(6) BO YAN NAING (LEADER OF THE PATRIOTIC LIBERATION ARMY)

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(7) MAN BA ZAN (LEADER OF THE KAREN NATIONAL UNION)

THE ARTICLE DID NOT INDICATE WHERE THE EXPELLED BURMESE WOULD GO.

2. DAMRONG SUNTHONSARATHUN, DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY OF THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR, CONFIRMED THE ACCURACY OF THE ARTICLE IN A CONVERSATION WITH THE DCM, ON FEBRUARY 20. DAMRONG SAID THE SEVEN WOULD HAVE TO LEAVE THAILAND, ALTHOUGH NO OTHER COUNTRY HAS YET AGREED TO TAKE THE BURMESE. THE DCM NOTED THAT THE U.S. HAD HELPED OUT WITH U NU, BUT WOULD NOT BE IN A POSITION TO HELP IN THIS CASE.

3. DAMRONG SAID THERE ARE CURRENTLY ABOUT 5,000 KAREN REFUGEES FROM BURMA LIVING IN THAILAND, IN ADDITION TO KAREN WHO HAVE ALWAYS LIVED IN THAILAND. THE RTG HAS RECENTLY APPROACHED THE BANGKOK OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES TO SEEK ASSISTANCE IN CARING FOR THE REFUGEES. UNHCR HAS APPARENTLY GIVEN NO FORMAL RESPONSE TO THE THAI REQUEST.

4. COMMENT: THE RTG APPEARS TO BE SERIOUS ABOUT EXPELLING THE SEVEN BURMESE DISSIDENT LEADERS, APPARENTLY AS A MOVE TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH BURMA. IT IS BY NO MEANS CERTAIN AT THIS POINT WHETHER THE THAI WILL BE ABLE TO CARRY OUT THEIR DECISION. ELEMENTS OF THE RTG, NOTABLY SUPREME COMMAND FORWARD, HAVE LONG SUPPORTED CERTAIN BURMESE DISSIDENT GROUPS AND COULD RESIST IMPLEMENTING THE DECISION.

WHITEHOUSE

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